

# Sociology 108: In-depth Interviewing

Professor Yan Long

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 3:45-5:45pm

Sign-up: <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/yaakt>

Spring 2021

Wednesdays 12-1:59

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## **COURSE OVERVIEW**

This seminar is designed to provide students with focused and hands-on “how to” of interview research. To best take advantage of what this seminar has to offer, you are required to conduct at least 8 interviews based on which you can write a research paper. As you do your project, we will tackle how to develop a researchable question, how to identify and recruit people to interview regarding it, how to prepare a comprehensive set of interview questions, how to conduct the interviews themselves, issues that can arise while conducting interviews, how to code and analyze interviews, and how to present one's findings at the end of a project. This process will help you to learn through practicing new skills, receiving feedback, and improving.

## **COURSE MATERIALS:**

### *Readings:*

- Weiss, Robert. 1995. *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*. New York: Free Press.
- All the other required texts will be made available on the bCourse site. They are listed in the section for “Readings.”

### *Equipment:*

- You will need to have an audio-recorder.
- Other Equipment: If you need equipment (laptop, webcam, microphone) in order to participate in our Zoom meetings, you may borrow them through the Student Technology Equity Program (STEP): <https://bit.ly/32eaimn>

## **COMMUNICATION POLICY**

bCOURSE will be used as the ONLY communication tool. If you are unable to meet a deadline due to a potentially “excusable” reason, you must contact Professor Long **72 hours** (3 full days) in advance of the due date and inquire as to the possibility of an extension or make-up.

## **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH:**

All social scientists must be aware of their ethical and professional obligations. We will discuss research ethics throughout the semester. Students should become familiar with the American Sociological Association's Code of Ethics (<http://www.asanet.org/code-ethics>) and the rules of UC- Berkeley's Committee for Protection of Human Subjects (<http://cphs.berkeley.edu/about.html>).

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Seminar Participation 10%**

This course is organized as a seminar. Seminars depend on the engaged and active participation of their members. Please bear in mind that the quality of that participation will be more important than quantity, as we discuss the readings and the research of the students in the course. If internet connectivity keeps you from attending class, you will need to communicate with me at least 24 hours before any given absence so that we can develop an alternative contribution to the class's learning experience. Missing more than two classes (in either synchronic or in a negotiated alternative form) will affect your grade. If you are synchronically present, you will be expected to participate in class discussions.

- So as to ensure this turns out to be the best learning experience possible for you, here are some remote-learning guidelines for you:
  - ⇒ Feel free to edit your name display so we all know what you prefer to be called in class.
  - ⇒ Since class discussion will be an essential part of the course, I ask that everyone turn their video on. Good communication is an important part of class discussions, and visual cues facilitate communication. Turning your video on or off affects the group. Feel free to turn it off when you need to for whatever reason (like your roommate walks behind you), as long as it stays on most of the time. At a minimum, turn your video on when speaking and always during breakout room discussions. Please email me if having your video on is going to be a problem for any reason.
  - ⇒ If you are self-conscious about seeing your own video or you find it distracting, know that you can turn off "self view" by clicking on your image/box and choosing that option from the list that pops up. If you have a concern about your personal space, you might consider: Positioning the camera so that only a wall is visible in the background; or Using a virtual background.
  - ⇒ Keep your audio muted until speaking (to eliminate background noise) and, when you'd like to speak, click the raised-hand symbol.

- ⇒ Feel free to use the chat tool if you'd like, but, if you do so, please direct comments to "everyone."
- ⇒ I plan to record our class sessions and post links to these recordings, just in case you'd like to review.

### **Interview Practicum 45%**

Beginning in Week 3, you are to execute your research project on a weekly basis. The following assignments are designed to keep you on track and build you skill sets. Together these eight assignments would lead up to your final paper. All the instructions for assignments will be available on bCourse.

Assignments worth 5% are evaluated on a 'check,' 'check +,' or 'check -' system. Assignments worth 10% are assigned letter grades.

Most assignments are due **at 5:00 pm on bCourse on Mondays**. If you hand in an assignment one day late (by 5:00 pm on Tuesday), your grade drops one full letter grade or down to a check-minus. No assignments handed in after Friday will be accepted.

| <b>% of final grade</b> | <b>Due Date</b> |  |
|-------------------------|-----------------|--|
| 5%                      | Feb 1           | Introduce your research questions and rationales |
| 5%                      | Feb 8           | Review existing literature                       |
| 10%                     | Feb 15          | Draft your own interview guide                   |
| 5%                      | Feb 22          | Complete CITI modules                            |
| 5%                      | Mar 29          | Transcribe the first interview                   |
| 10%                     | Apr 5           | Preliminary coding                               |
| 5%                      | Apr 12          | Analytical memo                                  |

### **In-Class Oral Presentation 10%**

#### **Final Research Paper 35%**

You shall submit a paper that presents an analysis or a research proposal based on your fieldwork at the end of the semester. The paper should be between 9-11 pages (excluding references and cover page). Further details will be provided in class. Submit your final paper on bCourse by Wednesday, May 12, 5pm.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

This is a working document. Adjustments will be made based on how your projects evolve.

\* Optional readings

### Jan 20| Week 1

Introduction

### Jan 27| Week 2

Research Design: Why interview and how to use in-depth interview data?

- Hochschild, Arlie. 2012 (1989). *The Second Shift: Working Families and the Revolution at Home*. Read Chapters 1, 2 and 4. New York: Avon Books.
- Paul, Anju. 2017. *Multinational Maids, Stepwise Migration in a Global Labor Market*. Read Chapters 1 and 5. Cambridge University Press.

### Feb 3| Week 3

Research Design: Literature review

- Weiss, Robert. Chapter 1.

\*Hart, Chris. 2018. *Doing a Literature Review*. Chapter 1. London: Sage Publications.

Assignment: Research proposal due

### Feb 10| Week 4

Research design: Who do we interview and how do we sample?

- Weiss, Robert. Chapters 2

\*Small, Mario. 2009. "How Many Cases Do I Need? On Science and the Logic of Case Selection in Field-Based Research." *Ethnography* 10(1): 5-38.

Assignment: Literature review due

### Feb 17| Week 5

Interview Guide: What questions to ask?

- Weiss, Robert. Chapter 3 and skim Chapter 4

- Rubin, Herbert J. and Irene S. Rubin. 2012. *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. Chapters 9-10. Sage.

Assignment: Interview guide draft due

## Feb 24| Week 6

Doing Interviews: How do I recruit interviewees?

- Ostrander, Susan. 1993. "SURELY YOU'RE NOT IN THIS JUST TO BE HELPFUL": Access, Rapport, and Interviews in Three Studies of Elites." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 22(1), 7-27.
- Biernacki, Patrick, and Dan Waldorf, 1981. "Snowball Sampling: Problems and Techniques in Chain Referral." *Sociological Methods and Research* 10 (2): 141-63.

\*Watters, John, and Patrick Biernacki. 1989. "Targeted Sampling: Options for the Study of Hidden Populations." *Social Problems* 36 (4): 416-30.

Assignment: CITI Training due

## Mar 3| Week 7

Doing Interviews: Gaining entrée

- Hermanowicz, Joseph C. 2002. "The Great Interview: 25 Strategies for Studying People in Bed." *Qualitative Sociology* 25 (4): 479-99.
- Snow, David, Louis A. Zurcher, and Gideon Sjoberg. 1982. "Interviewing by Comment: An Adjunct to the Direct Question." *Qualitative Sociology* 5: 385-411.

\*Herzog, Hanna. 2005. "On home turf: Interview location and its social meaning." *Qualitative Sociology* 28(1): 25-47.

\*Anderson, Kathryn, and Dana C. Jack. 1991. "Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analysis." In *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, edited by Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai. New York: Routledge.

## Mar 10| Week 8

Doing Interviews: Dilemmas, Challenges and Decisions (1)

- Weiss, Robert. Chapters 5.
- Dick, Hilary. 2006. "What to do with 'I Don't Know:': Elicitation in Ethnographic & Survey Interviews." *Qualitative Sociology* 29: 87-102.

\*Lillrank, Annika. 2012. "Managing the Interviewer Self." In *The Sage Handbook of Interview Research: The Complexity of the Craft*, edited by Gubrium, Holstein, Marvasti, and McKinney. Sage Publications.

Assignment: Complete one interview

### Mar 17| Week 9

Doing Interviews: Dilemmas, Challenges and Decisions (2)

- Khan, Shamus, and Colin Jerolmack. 2013. "Saying Meritocracy and Doing Privilege." *The Sociological Quarterly* 54(1): 9-19.
- Peshkin, Alan. 1988. "In Search of Subjectivity—One's Own." *Educational Researcher* 17(7): 17-21.

\*May, Reuben, and A. Buford. 2014. "When the Methodological Shoe is on the Other Foot: African American Interviewer and White Interviewees." *Qualitative Sociology* 37(1): 117-136.

\*Connell, Catherine. 2018. "Thank You for Coming Out Today: The Queer Discomforts of In-Depth Interviewing." In *Other, Please Specify: Queer Methods in Sociology*, edited by D'Lane Compton, Tey Meadow, and Krisen Schilt. University of California Press.

### Mar 24| Week 10

Spring recess

### Mar 31| Week 11

Data Processing: Fieldnotes and Transcription

- Wolfinger, Nicholas. 2002. "On Writing Fieldnotes: Collection Strategies and Background Expectancies." *Qualitative Research* 2(1): 85-93.
- Bird, Cindy. 2005. "How I Stopped Dreading and Learned to Love Transcription." *Qualitative Inquiry* 11(2): 226-48.

\*McLellan, Eleanor, Kathleen MacQueen, and Judith Neidig. 2003. "Beyond the Qualitative Interview: Data Preparation and Transcription." *Field Methods* 15(1): 63-84.

Assignment: One interview transcription due

## Apr 7| Week 12

### Data Analysis: Coding and Analysis

- Weiss, Robert. Chapters 6.
- Weston, Cynthia, et al. 2001. "Analyzing Interview Data: The Development and Evolution of a Coding System." *Qualitative Sociology* 24(3): 381-400.

\*Corbin, Juliet. 1986. "Coding, Writing Memos, and Diagramming." In *Qualitative Research in Nursing*, edited by Chenitz. Addison-Wesley.

Assignment: Preliminary coding due

## Apr 14|Week 13

### Interview Ethics: How do we protect those we interview?

- Lamont, Michèle. 2004. "A Life of Hard but Justified Choices: Interviewing Across (too) Many Divides." Pp. 162-171 in *Researching Race and Racism*, edited by Martin Bulmer and John Solomos. London: Routledge.

\*Newman, Katherine. 2002. "Qualitative Research on the Frontlines of Controversy," *Sociological Methods and Research* 31(2): 123-30.

\*Duncombe, Jean, and Julie Jessop. 2002. "'Doing Rapport' and the Ethics of 'Faking Friendship.'" In *Ethics in Qualitative Research*, edited by Melanie Mathner, Maxine Birth, Julie Jessop, and Tina Miller. Sage Publications.

\*Wlgemuth, Jennifer, et al. 2014. "Participants' Experiences of the Qualitative Interview: Considering the Importance of Research Paradigms." *Qualitative Research* 15(3): 351-72.

Assignment: Analytical memo due

## Apr 21|Week 14

### Data Analysis: Validity and Other Challenges

- Borland, Katherine. 1991. "That's Not What I Said": Interpretative Conflict in Oral Narrative Research." In *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, edited by Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai, pp. 11-25. New York: Routledge.
- Jerolmack, Colin, and Shamus Khan. 2014. "Toward an Understanding of the Relationship between Accounts and Action." *Sociological Methods and Research* 43(2):236-47.

\*Biernacki, Richard. 2014. "Humanist Interpretation versus Coding Text Samples." *Qualitative Sociology* 37 (2): 173-88.

**Apr 28 | Week 15**

Share Your Findings: In-Class Presentation

Final Paper Due (May 12th)

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### **Some Resources That May Be Helpful**

During this challenging time, there is a collection of useful information and tools to care for yourself.

1) Resource collection:

<https://recalibrate.berkeley.edu/one-click-mode/one-click-resources-undergraduate-students>

2) Cal Student Central

<http://studentcentral.berkeley.edu/>

If you need help with registration, financial aid, transcripts, etc., please visit Cal Student Central in 120 Sproul Hall.

3) Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS)

<https://uhs.berkeley.edu/counseling>

CPS offers counseling for academic, career and personal issues

4) UCB Basic Needs Center

<http://basicneeds.berkeley.edu/>

Offers support and information for housing and food resources. Focuses on providing economic, housing and food security to students.

5) Path to Care

<http://sa.berkeley.edu/dean/confidential-care-advocate/>

The PATH to Care Center provides affirming, empowering, and confidential support for survivors and those who have experienced gendered violence, including: sexual harassment, dating and intimate partner violence, sexual assault, stalking, and sexual exploitation. Confidential advocates bring a non-judgmental, caring approach to exploring all options, rights, and resources.

6) Multicultural Center

<https://campusclimate.berkeley.edu/students/ejce/mcc>

A student-won, student-led space, the Multicultural Community Center strives to integrate student-driven and community-oriented management, decision-making and visioning in everything that we do. In conjunction with our close partners, the MCC facilitates students'

greater involvement in multicultural-related education, collaborations and cross/inter-cultural community building.

7) Gender Equity Resource Center (GenEq)

<https://campusclimate.berkeley.edu/students/ejce/geneq/about-geneq>

The Gender Equity Resource Center, fondly referred to as GenEq, is a UC Berkeley campus community center committed to fostering an inclusive Cal experience for all. GenEq is the campus location where students, faculty, staff and alumni connect for resources, services, education and leadership programs related to gender and sexuality.

8) UC Berkeley Food Pantry

<https://pantry.berkeley.edu/>

The UC Berkeley Food Pantry is a direct response to the need among the student and staff population for more resources to fight food insecurity—the lack of nutritious food. With rising fees, textbook costs, and living expenses, it has become increasingly difficult for students to juggle the costs of living with the costs of obtaining a university degree, and thus many students are finding themselves choosing between essentials such as food and the costs of college. The UC Berkeley Food Pantry was established to provide emergency relief to help students and staff at the University of California. It is a part of the campus-wide food security efforts.